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ABSTRACT

This document is designed to help British secondary school students and other young adults understand the nature of work before they become wage earners. The document comprises a folder and eight loose-leaf flyers dealing with aspects of work. Work is interpreted to include industry, commerce, distribution, public services, and other paid or unpaid occupations. The folder provides basic background materials for each of the eight work sheets, lists publications for further reading, and provides a directory of organizations in England which assist people seeking employment. Topics of the work sheets are union origins, union activities, conditions of work, government and industry, management, finding a job, social services, and work. For each work sheet, information is presented on background, current status, personnel, relevant legislation, objectives, and predictions. Each work sheet concludes with discussion questions. For example, students are asked to discuss how much danger in the workplace is reasonable, how decisions about production matters should be made, how to evaluate a job offer, and how far the government should interfere to protect workers and the jobless. (DB)

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Topic folder number two

Work

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CEM Topic Folder Number Two - WORK

This Topic Folder has been written by Roger Undy, Research Associate of Oxford Centre for Management Studies, a member of the Industrial Relations Research Group, Oxford University, and a member of Marston Road United Reformed Church, Oxford, and Harry Undy, the International Secretary of the Christian Education Movement, to a design originally prepared by the latter. Statements and opinions expressed in this material are not necessarily those of the CEM as a whole. No part of the Topic Folder may be reproduced except with the express permission of CEM.

WORK

Most school leavers have some idea that they will become part of the "work scene", even if this understanding is expressed only in looking forward to being paid a wage. It is hoped that this Topic Folder will help people to go further than this, so that instead of being just a "work unit" to be controlled and exploited for impersonal reasons by some one else, they may know that they are persons who have a value and a contribution of their own, and that work is not simply a burden we have to bear.

Work - which includes industry, commerce, distribution, public services and other forms of paid or unpaid occupation - is close to the centre of any national society. For some people the way to judge work may be by the money it pays, for others it may be its social usefulness or the personal satisfaction it gives the worker. Work is too important to be taken for granted, so that there is a great need for a study of work as a truly personal (or moral) matter.

1. Origins of Trade Unions

Trade Union growth was partly a reaction to what was happening in society, partly it was an initiative taken by the workers. It is the personal roots of Trade Unionism which are most worth studying. As well as the strike for the Dockers' Tanner (1889) the other important strike of the period which has been well recorded was the Match Girls' strike of 1888. T.V. provides occasional programmes on this period, as well as on the General Strike of 1926 (which gave rise to the limitations of the Trades Disputes Act 1927, repealed in 1946).

2. Union Activities

More detailed information on these could be obtained from the Trades Union Congress or from individual unions. As part of their recruiting procedures the unions print explanations of their activities, services and aims, and leaflets may be requested from union addresses given overleaf. Note that the strike activity of the unions is not as all-important as some publicity suggests. If the period of constant and continual industrial growth and economic expansion is ending because natural resources have been over exploited, what preparations should the unions be making? Another line of enquiry could be the unions' international activities, such as their relations with Black unions in South Africa.

3. Conditions of Work

A start could be made by considering the physical conditions in school classrooms - desks, floor and air space, temperature, light, hours, dust and other hazards. Among the industrial conditions which have recently been generally considered (so that newspaper and TV resources may be available) are deep sea fishing (and the 'cod war'), the use of asbestos fibre in the building industry, and work on North Sea oil rigs. The Health Education Council produced a leaflet "Who's watching your health?" for use with the BBC TV film Man at Work.

4. Government and Industry

Governments intervene in industry by nationalisation, investment and taxation, as well as by legislation on health, safety and moral grounds. In the days when the monarch was the government, intervention was by direction and by the establishment of monopolies. The main questions seem to be concerned not with whether governments should interfere, but with how and how much.

5. Management of People

It must be stressed that even if a company does not appoint a Personnel Manager or a Personnel Department, the work of personnel management has to go on. If the managers of a firm do not realise that they are involved in personnel management in all its forms, industrial relations in that firm may be very poor. The effect of law and government regulations spreads through much of the personnel relations field.

6. Job Finding

The government department with major responsibility in this area is the Employment Service of the Department of Employment, and helpful leaflets may be requested from local or central offices (local addresses are in the telephone directory). Information on laws against discrimination can be obtained from the Home Office. Most Local Authorities are able to provide information and advice on employment opportunities in the area, and local newspapers should also be used for reference. Students might like to discuss the principle of "Last in, first out", and the choice between short-time working and redundancies in conditions of under-employment.

7. Social Services

Local Post Offices should have some leaflets which give detailed information on Social Services, others should be obtained from the local Social Security office (address in the telephone directory). It is, however, much more important to ask why the nation should be interested in the problems of the individual, and how much help (or interference) there should be, than simply to write up a scale of payments.

8. Work

The emphasis in most work places has been to make the worker fit the

machinery, from gigantic presses to shop counters, because the work-process has been more important than the worker. Isaac Asimov (a leading American scientist who is also a leading science fiction author) invented laws of Robotics for a series of stories about advanced robots. These were primarily to ensure that robots could not harm people; is it possible and practicable to formulate laws with similar purpose for everyday work methods?

* * * * * *

Addresses

Department of Employment, 8, St. James' Square, London, SW1.
Department of Health & Social Security, Alexander Fleming House, Elephant & Castle, London, SE1.
Health & Safety Commission, 1, Chepstow Place, Westbourne Grove, London W2.
Trades Union Congress, Congress Hse, Great Russell St. London WC1B 3LS (The Education Dept.has a teacher's pack & will advise on posters & films)
Transport & General Workers Union, Transport Hse, Smith Square, London, SW1.
Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, 110, Peckham Rd. London SE15 5EL.
General & Municipal Workers Union, Ruxley Towers, Claygate, Esher, Surrey.
Institute of Personnel Management, Central Hse, Upper Woburn Pl.London WC1H OHX
British Institute of Management, Management Hse, Parker St.London WC2B 5PT
World of Work, BBC, Broadcasting Hse, London W1A 1AA (send s.a.e. for Information Sheets).

For further reading

Situation Vacant	Malcolm Newell	Angus & Robertson
Work	Ronald Dingwall	R.E.P.
How to get a job	Marjorie Harris	Inst.Personnel Management
Focus Books - (10 book series)	George Kee	Blackie
The Story of the Dorchester Labourers		T.U.C.
The Trade Union Story	L.F. Hobley	Blackie
The General Strike of 1926	R. Cootes	Longmans (There & Then)
The Great Dock Strike	David Wasp	Longmans (There & Then)
A Match to Fire the Thames	Anne Stafford	Hodder & Stoughton
The Early Trades Unions	Jackdaw 35	Jonathan Cape
Industrial Relations	R.M. Grant	Ginn & Co
CEM PROBE - Industry	Keith Denerley	CEM/SCM Press

In the Public Libraries, careers books are classified as 371

The total size of the British work force is about	25,000,000
The total number of employees is about	22,100,000
The total number of employers & self employed persons is about	2,900,000
The numbers of workers in trade unions is about	11,200,000

In 1973 there were 7,197 working days lost in Britain through stoppages of work. This was 570 days per 1,000 people employed. In the same year West Germany lost 40 days per 1,000 employees, Canada lost 1,650, Italy lost 2,280 and the USA lost 770 days per 1,000 people employed.

Part 1 of C.E.M.
Topic Folder Number 2 - Work

Union Origins

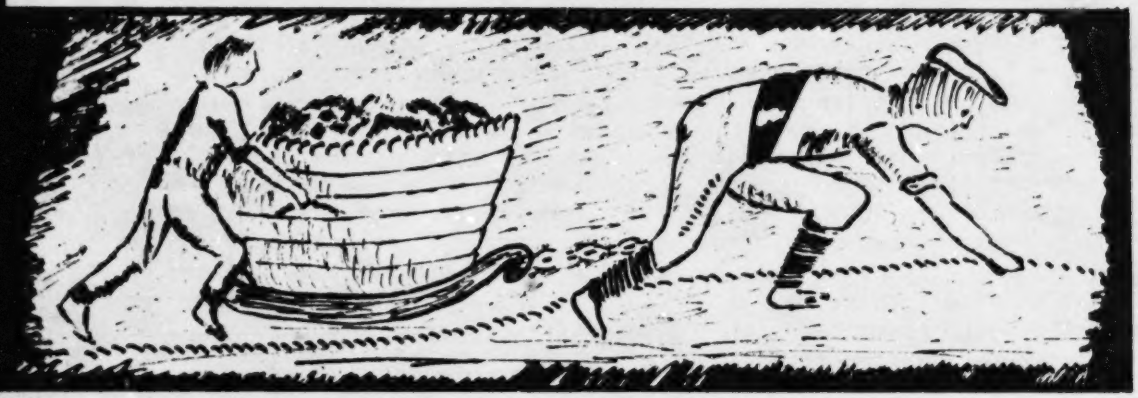
Sources

The first Trade Unions of the early 19th Century grew out of the 18th Century Urban trade or social clubs of craftsmen which the craftsmen tried to adapt to protect their interests against the changes caused by the Industrial Revolution. Later in the 19th Century the semi-skilled and unskilled workers also began to organise into unions, particularly in those industries most changed or actually produced by the Industrial Revolution.

The different phases of 19th Century unionism were largely due to the political and social influences then at work, and a number of the activists of the union movement were non-conformists, particularly Methodists, who saw the unions as providing the workers with some means through which they could try to control their own destiny and improve their standards of living.

Needs

Workers in the 19th Century had to rely on self-help because there was no welfare state and the government was reluctant or actually opposed to taking action which interfered with the free play of market forces. This acceptance of totally free competition helped to produce the appalling conditions in mines and factories in the early part of the century.



In the mines boys and girls were employed from the age of 5 years, and worked from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m.

In cotton mills in 1834, some 84,000 children (half of whom were under 14 years, and some as young as 5 or 6) were employed. Normal hours of work for children in the mills at this time were from 5 a.m. until 8 p.m., Saturdays included.

Few people had the vote right throughout the century, although some of the more highly skilled workers were enfranchised in 1867 and 1884. Workers were therefore unable to rely on the government for sympathetic action in the early part of the century and they also had no influence via the ballot box until towards the end of the century.

In fact the government tried to thwart workers' efforts to unite to protect themselves against the adverse effects of the industrial revolution by making unions illegal organisations under the Combination Act of 1799 - 1824. It was not until the repeal of the Combination Act in 1824 that the unions could operate in the 19th century without fear of prosecution. Trade Unions were originally developed as self-help institutions in the absence of any other political or social organisation which could give the protection the industrial worker needed.

Three stages

*** Between 1800 and 1851 the unions tended to be concentrated on a continuing basis among craftsmen organised on a district or a county basis. These unions organised both the long standing craft workers (e.g. the Preston Joiners) and the newer skilled workers in industries created by the technology of the new age (e.g. the Journeymen Steam Engine Makers).

There was also between 1800 and 1850 an outbreak of shorter-lived unionism among unskilled workers with clear political as well as industrial objectives. These unions, including the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union, were aimed at changing the existing social order. Some, under the influence of Robert Owen, wanted to change the laissez faire free competition (or Darwinism) for a cooperative system of production. This latter type of union suffered from a lack of funds and the employers' active opposition, and they did not have a long history, but they were the first unions to challenge the underlying assumptions of the industrial revolution and to recruit unskilled workers.

It was this unionism which came to the notice of Tolpuddle's agricultural labourers in the 1830s and provided the organisers of the Union in Tolpuddle with information and advice on how to organise workers at a time when farmers were reducing agricultural workers' wages locally from 7/- to 6/- per week. In 1834 six of the leading members of the Tolpuddle Union were transported, supposedly for taking oaths, but in reality for forming a union. Of these six Tolpuddle Martyrs, at least three were active Methodists.

** In 1851 a new era of trade unions began with the founding of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers on a national scale through an amalgamation between the Journeyman Steam Engine Makers and several other smaller unions. This "New Model" union set the pattern followed later by several other major unions, and it was also the forerunner of today's Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

The "New Model" unions were craft unions, which generally tended to play down the use of militant action as a means of winning wage increases and improving conditions, and to emphasise the provision of "friendly benefits". Friendly benefits, such as unemployment benefit, were of special use to members when there was no welfare state but there were times of high unemployment.

These unions were also active in lobbying Liberal Members of Parliament for legislation to help the unions, and in this activity they were supported by Christian Socialists who also helped the unions to present evidence to the Royal Commission on Trade Unions in 1867.

Between 1851 and 1889 other unions began to be formed or revived for the agricultural workers and the miners (amongst others). The agricultural workers were led in 1872 by a Methodist lay preacher, Joseph Arch, who came to the conclusion that "..... only organised labour could stand up, even for a single day, against the employers' tyranny". In the 1880s another Methodist, Ben Richard, was General Secretary of the Yorkshire Miners Union.

** There was another burst of activity in 1889, when "New Unions" were set up to organise largely unskilled (or non-apprenticed) workers. This type of union was stimulated by the strike for the "Dockers' Tanner" in 1889.

The Dockers' Tanner strike was for an increase in wages from 5d per hour to 6d per hour for workers in the London docks who suffered more than most workers from fluctuations in employment as they were hired on a casual basis when work was available and not for a weekly or any other guaranteed period. A mass procession of workers and their supporters (including Cardinal Manning) helped to gain public support for the dockers' claim for a 1d an hour wage increase.

"New Unionism" was the first unionism to become clearly identified with socialist ideas and to organise successfully on an on-going basis the unskilled workers. The "Gas Workers and General Labourers Union" of the late 19th century was the forerunner of today's General and Municipal Workers Union.

Chapel and union

Thus the origins of today's trade unions are mainly to be found in the 19th century with the craft, industrial and general unions being formed at different times in response to the particular changes in industry which affected the workers' wellbeing and which were in turn influenced by the existing social, political and economic environment.

Part of this environment in some unions and in certain parts of the country was the non-conformist tradition among the working class which provided some workers with the training in organising, public speaking etc., in the chapels which they could not gain anywhere else. The question of whether the trade unions owe most to Methodism or Marxism is perhaps now academic, but there can be little doubt that in their formative years the unions were influenced by those activists who saw in unions the means through which they could make their Christian beliefs relevant to their fellow workers by helping the unions to improve the social wellbeing of those who suffered from the adverse effects of work in an industrialised society.

Question

If all today's trade unions were disbanded, what kind of workers' organizations would now be formed to deal with modern needs?

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Union activities

Wide range

For many people thinking about work, trade union activity may seem to be connected almost entirely with wage claims. This is a part but only a part of the work of the unions. The activities of trade unions can be seen both in the work situation and outside. It is the wide membership of unions in nearly all work situations that gives them this interest.

On the job

Trade union activities involve the unions in collective bargaining over wages and conditions of work. Collective bargaining has come to be a technical term; it is a way of coming to joint decisions involving the management and the workers. The other possibilities would be decisions taken only by the management or only by the workers, or to obey the law.

Collective bargaining is the most important means today by which the workers have a direct influence on their work situation. Through this, the trade unions are trying to give individuals some control over their working life by joining with the management to determine for example the wages which will be paid for an amount of work done or for hours worked.

This may extend to joining together to decide not just how things are made but what is made. Shop stewards at Lucas have been trying to do this.

In the work situation, shop stewards are individuals who represent their unions mainly in negotiations at the shop, site or factory level. Full-time officials of the unions will normally negotiate at company or industry and national level.

Shop stewards will also help individual workers to get their "grievances" settled by helping to take their cases through agreed procedures. In any disciplinary procedures the shop steward may also play a part by representing the member of the union. From place to place shop stewards may also deal with a very wide range of issues from pay to canteen facilities.

Outside

Trade unions will be active socially and politically in the community.

Social: some unions have a tradition of helping members to find work. In some craft jobs, particularly, a union card may be of use in helping a worker to get a job.

Training: some unions, especially those dealing with skilled crafts with apprentices, help to determine the training or apprenticeship programme through discussions with the managements.

Education: some unions provide scholarships for full-time education for their members. A few are helped to study at Ruskin College (Oxford) or at one or two other adult education colleges. The T.U.C. cooperates with such bodies as the Workers' Education Association and the extra-mural departments of universities in providing part-time education. This may be a mixture of general education and training programmes for shop stewards or other trade union officers.

Friendly benefits: some unions provide financial help for members who are unemployed, retired or sick.

Legal aid: this is made available to many members and is widely used to get compensation for workers involved in accidents at work.

Pensions: over the last few years the unions have been very active in trying to get pensions generally increased. The Transport and General Workers' Union has been particularly active in this.

Politically: many unions are linked with the Labour Party and exert pressure on that party for legislation to protect workers. Individual trade unions may sponsor parliamentary candidates. The unions' political activity is paid for from separate funds to which members are not forced to contribute.

Generally the trade unions work politically for a more equal distribution of income and wealth. The Trade Union Congress is largely a political pressure group for the trade unions and it is also active in agreeing policy on incomes, employment, etc.

Recent trends

On the job

The unions' traditional collective bargaining over wages and hours is being extended into areas which have previously been determined by management only. Negotiations over pensions and fringe benefits have led to more issues being decided jointly by unions and management.

There has been a growth in "white collar" unionism as more managers are employees rather than people with a family or investment interest in the business they manage.

Negotiations over wages tend to be limited by government income policies. When the £6 maximum pay rise was agreed, negotiations began and ended with recognition of that limit.

There has been more involvement in health and safety matters at work. Sometimes shop stewards have taken the lead; sometimes there have been specially elected safety representatives.

The unions have taken more interest in training shop stewards; new legislation about the matters with which the unions are mostly concerned have made this training generally more important. Shop stewards are in one sense "amateurs", that is they continue their ordinary work most of the time. It is important that they are helped to cope with the extra duties which their election as shop stewards brings to them.

Outside

The friendly benefits which the unions have provided have been sick pay, unemployment pay, etc. As the services of the Welfare State have increased the unions' help has become less important.

Union involvement in politics has grown; this has been partly as a reaction to greater government involvement in industrial relations, partly as a result of the unions' recognition of their own power.

Membership

In 1970 there were 328 trade unions on the Register of Friendly Societies.
In 1974 there were 111 trade unions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress.
The biggest union affiliated to the T.U.C. in 1974 was the Transport and General Workers Union with 1,785,496 members; the smallest was the Sheffield Wool, Shear Workers Union with 19 members.

There is a wide range of interests shown in the titles of the trade unions. The unions include the Association of Post Office Executives, the Musicians Union, the Inland Revenue Staff Association, the Fire Brigades Union, the Civil Service Union, the Bakers Union, the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers and the British Airline Pilots Association. To look after the interests of their members, various unions have to take up many different activities.

About 46% of the working population of Britain belong to trade unions. The unions encourage their members to take an active part in all their affairs, but as with all organisations the unions actually reflect the pressures of members who make time to share the work.

Questions

Should all decisions about production matters be left to the professional managers? This would include what is made, how it is made, the conditions in which it is made, the wages paid for making it, and how much is made.

In present industrial conditions, what are the most important matters with which the workers ought to be asking the unions to deal?

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Conditions of work

Physical conditions

The physical conditions in which people work will vary from job to job and from place to place. The age of the building or of the ship or of the mine will make a difference, the amount of heat, space, noise, dangerous machinery and light will make a difference, whether the work is indoors or out of doors will make a difference.

Anyone who is expecting to start work should whenever possible see the conditions at the intended place of work before starting. Many big firms will take potential young employees round the work place before they leave school. In the large towns and cities it is quite common for factory workers to see classes making a visit.

Where the conditions of work are dangerous or dirty there may be a higher wage to compensate for this. Such an increase in pay is normally made as a result of negotiations. It is sometimes asked if it would not be better for the employers to pay to improve the conditions rather than to pay to compensate for them.

Controls

The Law has some effect on conditions at work. There are Acts of Parliament which lay down minimum requirements for safety at work. The first of these Acts was introduced more than a century ago, and they have been revised or replaced at various times since then.

Three Acts of Parliament are perhaps better known than any others for laying down minimum standards of health, safety and welfare.

One is the Factories Act which covers such matters as the fencing of dangerous machinery, the provision of First Aid care, and the hours of work for young people and women. There are also the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act and the Mines and Quarries Act. Between them these three Acts cover nearly all work situations.

There is also other legislation which affects agriculture and transport. In total there are 31 statutes and nearly 500 statutory instruments dealing with this general subject.

Health and safety

A more recent Act is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This does not replace existing legislation but is in addition to such as the Factories Act.

The 1974 Act is what is called an Enabling Act, that is it provides a means of changing and adding to existing law without passing a new Act of Parliament every time. Its aim is to protect all people at work and it lays down that "It shall be the duty of every employer to ensure so far as is reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare of all his employees".

An employer who has more than five employees is required under this Act to provide a written statement of his safety policy and of the arrangements for maintaining health and safety at work. The employer is also required to provide information and training on safety for the employees.

Trade unions are able to elect the safety representatives. These will be members of a Safety Committee which is to help to protect the workers' health and safety at work.

Inspection

The office of Factory Inspector is well established but the Health and Safety at Work Act gives the inspectors new powers. If the law is broken the inspectors may issue an Improvement Notice and in this they may order remedial action to be taken within a certain time.

The inspectors also have power to issue a Prohibition Notice

if there is risk of serious personal injury (even if the law is not being broken). This Notice will stop the machine or activity which causes the risk. The inspectors still have their power to prosecute as well as these two new powers.

When a work situation is dangerous it is usually fairly easy for individual workers to raise questions of health and safety. This may be done through the management of the firm, through the trade union, or through the Factory Inspector.

An employer with more than just a few employees has to provide First Aid facilities. Large firms may have a Nursing Sister present in the work place during normal hours of work, with a fully equipped industrial clinic and a doctor available.

Terms

Other factors which affect the conditions of work are those which control the right to keep a job.

The Contracts of Employment Act 1972 (with some amendments) gives both employer and employee rights to minimum periods of notice. An employer has to give the employees written details of the main conditions of their employment. The employer also has to inform the employees in writing how to take up a grievance about their employment. When there is a complaint about a contract of employment it is dealt with by an Industrial Tribunal.

A group of Acts including the Trade Union Labour Relations Act 1974 and the Employment Protection Act 1975 give protection to individual rights. These include rights concerning unfair dismissal, guaranteed pay during short time working, medical suspension, time off for public duties and maternity rights.

Equality

The Trades Union Congress first called for equal pay for men and women in 1888. The Equal Pay Act 1970 aims to remedy discrimination between men and women in regard to pay and other terms and conditions of employment. Women have the right to equal terms and conditions for work of the same or a broadly similar nature as that done by men or when they are doing work of equal value.

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 aims to stop discrimination against women, against men, and against married persons in the fields of employment, education, goods, facilities, services and premises.

The Disabled Persons Acts of 1944 and 1958 were intended to help disabled persons to get employment. Such people can be registered as disabled and the Act requires employers to employ a quota of disabled persons. The standard quota is 3% of those employed, but many employers appear not to have the required 3%.

Cash

Since the 15th century the law has tried to stop "Truck". This is the custom of paying workers in something other than the proper currency of the land. Payment must be in "cash not kind", and also not in tokens, such as tokens which can only be exchanged for goods in the employers' shops or for the employers' goods. The same Acts control what may be deducted from wages.

Society

It is not so long ago that most people accepted without much questioning the right of a "boss" to run his workplace just as he thought fit, and according to his own ideas of what was important (and this might only be profit). If he could not find people to work for him, he might have to increase the wage he offered, or possibly he might have to improve the conditions, but he had the final decision.

The concern of the government for the condition of the workers has grown and seems to be still growing. This concern and the action it produces illustrates the way in which society changes.

Questions

Is it possible to say how much danger (or dirt) it is reasonable to accept at work? In industries such as mining and fishing, where danger cannot (apparently) be eliminated, how is a reasonable compensation in higher wages to be calculated? Who should pay the cost - the customer, the employer or the government (i.e. the tax payer)?

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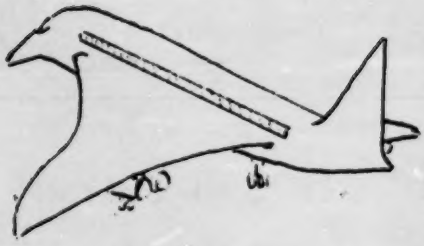
Government and Industry

Involvement

Governments have been involved in industry for a long time. Their involvement has usually grown during war-time when governments wanted to direct industry to support the war effort. The growth of the Navy in Tudor times shows how effective this can be.



Since 1945 British governments have all aimed at a state of full employment and governments' involvement in industry has grown as they have attempted this. At the same time, governments have also wanted certain economic conditions; these have been stable prices, economic growth and a surplus in our balance of payments.

Objectives

From time to time it has seemed that these four major objectives are not compatible. The government has tried to juggle all four together and has tried to influence industries to help them. Industries have been asked to increase their productivity, to hold their prices down, to find more jobs for people, to export more goods, to import fewer goods and so on. The governments' methods have included price controls, wage limitation policies, subsidies for training etc.

A government may also involve itself in industry for social and political reasons. In the nationalized industries such as coal, gas, electricity and airports, the government itself is a major employer. In these industries, the government has to accept the aims which it asks private industry to accept.

The government may also want to protect consumers from the unfair use of industrial power. It may try to limit the power of private monopolies or it may try to influence the biggest firms so that they keep their prices down and force the smaller firms to do the same. The Monopolies and Mergers Commission is used to keep a check on firms.

The government's main aim at the moment seems to be to make manufacturing industries more efficient. It intervenes to do this because it sees greater efficiency as a long term means of getting economic growth, more suitable prices, higher employment and a satisfactory balance of payments. Also, of course, the government wants to win the next election (usually all governments do) so it may intervene to help keep the level of employment higher than industry might manage without government intervention.

Social sense

A government may run an industry for social reasons when simple economic reasons are not sufficient. For example, if it is agreed that there is less pollution from rail transport than from road-transport the government may decide to meet any losses made by the railways. There may be other industries which are socially desirable which governments will also subsidise.

Some industries which the government runs are obviously paid for mainly out of taxes and other public money. These industries include the Health Service, Police, Education and the Armed Forces. The government is involved in these with a social purpose but they can still be run efficiently in terms of financial profit.

The government may be able to see methods and opportunities which are not clear to the people in industry. It may see opportunities for greater investment, better ways of training the labour force and chances for cooperation between different groups in an industry and these are ways of making industry efficient.

Earnings

Industrial efficiency is a main interest for modern governments. Britain needs an efficient manufacturing industry to produce

goods for export to earn foreign income. The foreign income is needed to pay for the imports of food, raw materials and other manufactured goods.

This applies to most countries, but Britain is a greater importer than many. Compared with the value of everything the nation produces, Britain's imports in 1972 were the equivalent of 22%; in the same year USA's imports were 6%, Japan's 8%, France's 16% and Germany's 20%. Nearly half of Britain's imports is food, beverages, tobacco, fuel and basic materials.

The government at present tries to modernise and restructure some parts of industry by the way it makes money available. This is done under the Industry Act and through the National Enterprise Board of the National Economic Developments Office. Some specific industries which have been chosen for help are the construction industry, printing machines and foundries.

Aid

It is wellknown that the government helped British Leyland (BLMC) and Chryslers when they had financial trouble. The intervention was both to help to maintain the British Car Industry and to maintain employment.

The government also assists firms to develop in regions where there are dying industries, particularly the old heavy industries such as ship building. In areas which are called "Assisted Areas" there is special help for new industries which will provide employment. These areas include Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, parts of Northern England and S.W. England. In these regions there are "Special Development Areas" where unemployment has been very high and where there is special concern for investment.

Training

The government takes action over training facilities. In the long run an efficient industry ought to provide jobs but in the short run the close down of old industry and the change in established industries may lead to greater unemployment.

The Government has set up a job Creation Scheme run by the Manpower Services Commission. This gives priority to projects offering training or further education opportunities and providing a minimum of 30 man months of work.

The Training Services Agency runs a Training Opportunities Scheme. There is a priority to provide young people with full-time first year off the job training in a number of centres. The aim for 1976 is that about 80,000 people will benefit from TOPS schemes.

In order to limit unemployment as far as possible the government offers employers subsidies to keep workers. The Temporary Employment subsidy is intended to help an employer to keep established workers. The recruitment subsidy for school-leavers helps an employer to take on school-leavers as new workers.

Questions

Governments and local authorities have taken over responsibility for schools and hospitals, after the Church showed the original need. Is there any other part of the "service" industries which a government should take over from voluntary organizations?

Should nationalised industries be run for profit or for social reasons?

In times of war, governments take the power to direct people where they should work, not only by conscripting them into the armed forces but also by directing them into certain industries and workplaces. Should a government also take the powers to direct labour in times of economic threat to the country? Should the same powers be used to improve the ecological situation?

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Management of People

Personnel

Large firms generally appoint a Personnel Manager, and may have a Personnel Department; small firms may not do this, but still any firm that employs personnel (i.e. people) has to manage them. What is said in this paper about the work of a Personnel Manager will apply in small firms even if the work is shared out and there is not one person appointed.

A personnel manager has the same basic duties as other managers - to look after the firm's interests. This means that he supports the firm's goals of maximum profits in proportion to the money spent, satisfactory profits on the goods sold, the best possible share of the market, the least possible losses, and the firm's survival.

In some work places (e.g. hospitals, prisons, etc) the end product may not be goods for sale (but, for example, healthy people), but even here there is usually a limit on costs.

The Personnel Manager helps the firm to employ workers as effectively as possible, with the goals of the firm in view. Whether there is a special Personnel Manager or not, all the managers in the firm will be doing personnel work as they try to get the best out of the workers. Production managers and marketing managers, for instance, have to bè aware that they are dealing with people.

People

The management of a firm may also feel an obligation to the employees and even to society as a whole. For social or ethical reasons the management may set out to treat workers in a different way from their treatment of machinery. People and machines (which might be called labour and capital) are both used as efficiently as possible, but they should be seen to be different. If the Personnel Manager's concern for the welfare of individuals conflicts with the firm's commercial goals, he may be made to change his approach.

A personnel manager will usually be involved with each worker as an individual from the start of the work's employment with the firm. Personnel managers are usually responsible for the following work:

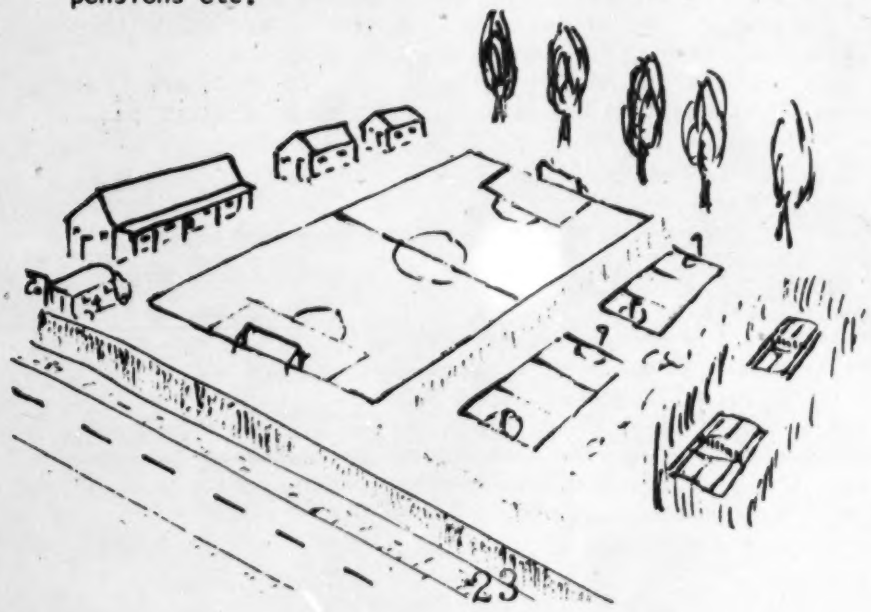
RECRUITMENT:- Interviewing applicants, setting up selection methods, assessing a candidate's skill, aptitude, attitude, etc.

INDUCTION:- Big firms particularly will take some trouble to arrange a suitable introduction to the firm for a new starter. The new worker may be shown round, introduced to work-mates, foreman and shop steward, and be told how the particular job fits into all the firm's business.

TRAINING:- This may not appear to be done by Personnel, as other departments will be looking after such matters as apprenticeship training. Personnel will have a general responsibility, and will be particularly concerned with plans for day-release or sandwich courses, and may also assess the worker's progress.

TRANSFER:- Considering and arranging a move from one job to another within the firm, especially if it is part of a training programme, or if the worker requests it.

WELFARE:- This includes health and safety, and it may be Personnel's responsibility to check the first aid equipment, canteen facilities, transport, sports facilities, pensions etc.



COMMUNICATION:- Passing on to the workers information about how the firm is doing and what it is doing - and checking that the worker receives the information. This work may be linked with CONSULTATION over some items of common worker-manager interest.

All this work should be done, even if there is no personnel manager. When there is a personnel manager the workers may not see him or her if the firm mostly wants such a manager to be in the background to advise the other managerial staff.

Industrial Relations

This label is usually kept to cover situations where the individual workers combine in a staff association, a professional body, or (more likely) a trade union. This body then represents the workers' collective views as well as individual views in discussions, consultations or conflicts with the management.

The management may be represented in these meetings by the Personnel Manager, or the ordinary manager may do the work, advised and guided by the Personnel (or Industrial Relations) Manager.

The second paragraph of this paper listed some goals which the firm might have. Individual workers may have their own goals, such as maximum wages, maximum job security, maximum job satisfaction, some control over their work situation, and some say in what work is done and how it is done.

Some of these goals might sometimes be in conflict with some of the management's goals, and if so either there will be a compromise or one side will win. A compromise if the workers are in a union, usually takes place through negotiation carried out for the workers by their union representative, who may be a shop steward or a full-time official. (Sometimes a shop steward has a different title - in the printing industry he is the "father of the chapel".)

Priorities

Individual workers may think of themselves as part of a work group, and see their interests as part of the group's interests. The group's existing custom and practice at work may also be something with which the individual worker becomes identified, and all the workers in the group will try to maintain their special status, the wage differential between their group and

other groups, etc. Unions may also represent this group's interest, so that a union representing craftsmen may seek to assure craftsmen a bigger wage than non-craftsmen.

The Trades Unions and the union leaders may have additional objectives which are not so important to individual workers or work groups. Unions may, for example, want to have a big membership so that the leaders will have some political influence. A union's national policies may sometimes be different from the policies of one small part of its membership, and then the union must try to reconcile these differences or discipline its membership. Generally, however, unions are sufficiently democratic for a union's policies to be similar or identical to the policies of the membership.

Decisions

Where a firm's workforce is unionised, there are several ways of making decisions.

UNILATERAL:- Decisions are taken by the management alone over investment and mergers; in some situations the union may have power to decide (e.g. appointing new recruits in the printing industry).

JOINT:- Decisions taken by union and management in negotiations (when the Personnel Manager may be the company's negotiator).

THIRD PARTY:- Decisions made by an arbitrator when management and unions have agreed to refer the questions.

STATUTORY:- Decisions taken to comply with the law, such as guarding dangerous machines.

CONSULTATION:- Decisions usually taken by the management after listening to and discussing problems with trade union representatives.

Questions

What are the differences between capital (machines) and labour (people) which a company could reasonably be asked to make, when it is aiming to make a profit from its payments on both?

Is it necessary for a worker to know anything more about the firm he works for than what they should pay him?

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Job Finding

Walk-in

A lot of young people have no trouble finding work. Some would say these people are lucky, others would say they are not free to choose.

If a boy's Dad and Grandad have always worked down the pit, the boy might easily be found a job there. If a boy's grandfather started a business where his father now works, he might just go into the business. A girl whose Mam and Grandma were machine minders in the mill might go there without question. A son whose mother is Queen knows where he will finish up.

Search

But many others do not expect any one kind of work, or refuse to do what is expected. Unless they drop out of the system, they try to find work.

Anyone still in school should have an advantage because of the careers advice which the school or the local authority can give.

This is not just a matter of finding strong or skilled labour for local firms, but the first aim should be to help the young person by advising on the most useful subjects to study, and the whole range of possible jobs in the area (and beyond).

Advice on particular jobs should include future prospects and chances of in-service training as well as immediate matters such as wages, hours and conditions of work.

As well as help and information in school, there are all the other ways of finding work - talking to friends and relatives, looking in local and national newspapers, looking for vacancy notices on factories and shops, visiting government Job Centres and private employment agencies, writing to places where you would like to work.

Application

Once someone has found the kind of vacancy that looks as if it might be right, the next step is the application.

An application might be made by filling in a form (some of the advertisements include a form), or by writing a letter, or by calling personally at the place of work. An application is not a promise to take the job if it is offered, and it is not a guarantee that the applicant will be given the job.

The application is the employer's first chance to make any kind of decision, and if he has any strong feelings about how people should apply, this first opportunity might also be his final decision. If an advertiser asks for applications to be in handwriting, he may well throw type-written applications away.

There are laws which say that in general there may not be discrimination against an applicant for a job on grounds of race or sex.

Interview - face to face

If the application is made by calling to see the employer, it is also an interview. If the application is made in writing, and if the employer thinks the applicant sounds reasonable, the interview will be arranged separately.

An interview is a chance for two or more people to see each other, and a job interview is as important for the applicant as it is for the employer.

The employer will have ideas about what is necessary. The interview might be by the owner, a personnel manager, or even by the receptionist, but whoever it is should have a clear idea of what is to be discovered during the interview.

Is the applicant's appearance (strong enough, tall enough, tidy enough, clean enough, active

enough, nimble enough) right for the job?

Is the applicant's personality (pleasant, shy/confident/cheeky, polite/rude) right for the job?

Is the applicant qualified for the job and/or ready (and qualified) to learn?

Is the applicant on time and prepared for the interview?

Thoughtful employers are also ready to help the applicant, because they know that the interview is a two-way meeting, and they want to persuade the right applicant to take the job.

Is it me?

An applicant should also have a clear idea of what he or she wants from the interview.

First he wants to have the job offered to him (even if he may decide not to take it), so this means taking reasonable care about appearance and approach. He should be himself, but his best self (and this is not always in his trendiest clothes). He should know something about the work, not only so that he can understand the conversation, but also in order to make a sensible decision about the job. Find out something beforehand.

There are some important questions to settle, most of them at an interview, although some are answered at the Job Centre or Employment Agency.

Can I work with the boss (or manager or foreman or supervisor)?

Can I work in the conditions (noise, heat, crowd) of the workplace?

Can I work the hours required?

What are the wages, prospects, training opportunities, chances of transfer to another department or town?

The answers to the first two questions can only be found by seeing the person and the place, and this should be possible

before a final decision is made (and if you are not allowed to see them, why?). The employer should be quite clear about answers to the last questions.

A new kind of life

A first job may cause a complete change in life style- new freedom, new responsibilities, new outside discipline, new self-discipline, new opportunities, new dangers, new influences, new friends and new rivals, new income and new expenses.

For many people, the first job is the start of over forty years of working for a living. If work is a bore or a nuisance, 40 years of boredom and trouble is a very dim future.

The law gives a lot of protection to workers, but there are still some things that each person has to do, things that are really important for someone going to a new job.

Find out if any extra training (evening classes, sandwich courses, etc) will help as time goes by.

Work out what the wages will cover, and make up a realistic budget for necessaries, savings and luxuries.

Keep your feet on the ground, even if your ambitions are stratospheric. Being given the sack after a few weeks is not a good start.

Questions

1. In 1975 and 1976 teenagers went to Angola to serve as mercenary soldiers - untrained, poorly equipped, and badly fed. Many jobs are dangerous, but this seemed to be a foolish risk.

2. Here are some of the things which a job seeker might have in mind: wages, time off, pension, size of firm, danger, job security, social value of the product, distance from home, chances for further qualifications, interesting work. Can you put these in order of importance? If there are any that conflict with each other, which would you keep?

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Social Services

Free conflict

When the Industrial Revolution began to bring large numbers of people together to work in factories and workshops, the power was soon in the hands of the employers. In a free market an employer could hire and fire as and when he chose, and this strong threat of the sack NOW was often enough to frighten an employee into accepting harsher conditions.

Open warfare between boss and worker causes heavy casualties not only in the industry but also in the society (that is the nation) as a whole. The nation is likely to be better off and more peaceful if some battles can be avoided.

There are also questions of what is fair. With Britain's long Christian tradition there have grown strong feelings that it is wrong for the strong to bully the weak. If one person or one group of people is always being done down, many of us think that the weak ought to be given some extra help or protection. The strong may try to stop this, because they want to keep their power, so changes will take time.

Interference

For centuries there have been attempts in Britain to protect the poor, not only for their own sake but for the sake of general peace. The Poor Laws were part of this. It has only been for a short time that the same kind of attempt has been made to interfere in industry, although the work of such reformers as Lord Shaftesbury is well known.

One point of weakness for the employee is the threat of the sack. If unemployment means real suffering for the whole family, a worker might help the employer to break the law about conditions at work, even if this makes his work more dangerous or worse paid (see paper 3 - Conditions at Work). Help for the unemployed is important in the general balance of power between employer and employee.

Also there is the growth from Britain's Christion tradition of a feeling that the innocent should not suffer - a family should not starve or be miserable just because there is no work available or no-one able to work for high enough wages.

In work

(Mostly the Employment Protection Act 1975)

If an employer has to introduce short time working, or even to lay off workers, because there is not enough work, the employees are guaranteed some pay for a limited time. The employer has to pay a full day's pay (up to £6 a day) for five days in any period of three months.

A pregnant employee may not be dismissed because of her pregnancy. If she cannot continue in her usual job she must be offered a suitable alternative job if one is available. If she cannot be found such a job she is entitled to maternity pay and reinstatement after the baby is born. (There are certain conditions and limitations.)

An employee who loses a job because of the employer's insolvency does not lose money owed to him by that employer. The money may be paid by the Department of Employment, up to a maximum of eight weeks at £80 per week.

Employees are entitled to reasonable notice of dismissal. This is notice of one week after four week's service, and two weeks after two years' service. The length of notice increases until it becomes a maximum of twelve weeks after twelve years' service (and an employee who is dismissed has a right to a written statement of the reasons for dismissal).

An employee also has protection against unfair dismissal, and there are certain conditions laid on an employer who wants to make workers redundant.

Low pay

If someone is in full time work but is paid so little that the normal expenses are likely to be too much to be met out of the wage, a Family Income Supplement might be payable. The State has set up the Department of Health and Social Security, and the Family Income Supplement is one of the many matters handled by this Department.

The conditions laid down for the payment of a Supplement are approved by the government and are quite clear, but the government has the power to change details as the general situation in the country changes. The Supplement is payable only if the person making the claim is in full-time work and has at least one child in the family and has a family income less than a stated figure.

Early in 1976 the qualifying income for someone with one child was below £31.50 a week, and for someone with six children it was below £49.00. These figures are for the gross income (wages for husband and wife, and family allowances) before any deductions. There is also a maximum payment of £7 a week. If a supplement is awarded, it is normally for 52 weeks. The supplement is collected from the Post Office after the Department has made the arrangements.

Two examples are given:

** A couple with two children: qualifying income according to regulations is below £35.

Man's earnings	£27.10
Family Allowances	£ 1.50
	£28.60

Difference between income and qualifying income is £35.00 - £28.60 = £ 6.40
Supplement = ½ the difference = £ 3.20

** A single woman with one child: qualifying income according to regulations is below £31.50

Woman's earnings	£16.50
No other income	

Difference between income and qualifying income is £31.50 - £16.50 = £15.00
Supplement is the maximum of £7, which is less than half the difference.

Anyone who qualifies for a Family Income Supplement is also entitled to free prescriptions, free dental treatment and free glasses; free milk and vitamins (for expectant mothers and young children); free school meals for children at school; refund of fares for attending hospital for treatment; legal aid.

A self-employed person may also qualify for the supplement if the income for the business is below the qualifying income.

Out of a job

If the person who is out of work is physically fit and aged between 16 and the retirement age, he would normally be expected to register as a work seeker, and would receive

unemployment benefit during the time out of work.

Supplementary benefits are cash benefits payable to someone who is not in full-time work and whose income (if any) is not enough for their needs. In an emergency someone in full-time work might be entitled to supplementary benefits.

Supplementary pensions are paid to retired people whose pension or other income is not sufficient. Supplementary allowances are paid to people over sixteen but under the retirement age who are not covered by unemployment benefit. An example of the kind of fit adult who might qualify is someone who has to look after children or aged parents.

When anyone claims Supplementary Benefits, information about their circumstances is gathered during confidential interview with someone from the local Social Security office. In emergencies, or in the case of homeless people, special arrangements can be made.

The amount of Supplementary Benefits is worked out by adding together the "scale rates" approved by Parliament (to cover normal costs for food, heat and light, repairs to clothing, and some household expenses), an amount for rent, and perhaps a sum for special expenses.

If the person who claims benefits already has an income greater than this, supplementary benefits will not be paid, but if the income is less the benefit will be the same as the difference between the actual income and the calculated requirements.

Questions

How far should the State interfere to protect workers and the jobless? If everything was left alone by the government, what would be the effect on individuals, families, industries and the nation?

What kind of help ought to be given to people who really cannot find a job with a good or fair wage? Should they be helped to live comfortably or miserably or how?

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Work

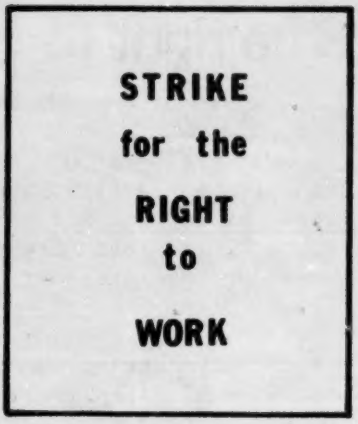
What is work?

WORK is a word that arouses strong emotions.

Some people think of work as a curse, and their greatest ambition is to escape from work and from any future need to work.

Some people think of work as a right, and their greatest ambition is to find a job and to hold on to it without being dismissed.

WORK Is not just work. Is it a right or is it a curse?



Street Poster, late 1975.

People and work

The underpaid worker on a tea estate, or in a gold mine, and the peasant whose tiny plot of dry land cannot feed his family, may say that work is a curse. The factory hand who faces a noisy, dangerous, boring machine all day and goes home too weary to speak to the rest of the family might agree with them.

The writer of chapter 3 of the book of Genesis certainly agreed with them. He wrote about work as being part of a curse with which God punished Adam.

The well-paid (or reasonably paid) industrial worker who has a hi-fi, furniture, and a car on hire purchase, and a mortgage to buy a house, may say that work is a right. Even if he (or she) does not enjoy work, he demands it. When there is unemployment, and talk of more businesses closing, there are demonstrations to demand work. People will strike for their right to work.

Women in many lands die while they are still young by our standards. They have to feed the children, keep the house right, work in the fields, carry the water. They are killed by their work.

Many European and American women look for extra work in order to add interest and variety to their lives, because what they have to do at home threatens them with "death by boredom".

Work can help us to live, or it can help us to die. When we think about work we have to think about the circumstances in which the work is done. We have to think about the energy and the materials, about the cost and the payment, about the produce and the "value" of the work.

The right to work

Look again at the "right to work".

In most histories of transport you can find a picture of a man with a red flag walking in front of a train or a car. That was work, and the men were paid for it. Did they have a "right" to that work? How would they fit into the motor-ways, or the inter-city express railways or Concorde's flight path?

People have been paid to make fur coats from the skins of nearly-extinct animals: have they a right to that particular work? People were paid to make Thalidomide, to hang criminals, to distribute blue asbestos, to shoot or bomb Germans/Japanese/Russians/British: what rights are there to these jobs?

When unemployment was increasing in Britain in 1975, a shop stewards' committee in part of the British aerospace industry made time to think about the threat to their union members. The committee issued a statement that they could not ask for all the old jobs to be kept going, because too many things had changed. However, they did ask for work to be provided which would use their skills and energies to make things properly useful to society in the new circumstances.

This is saying something important about the "right to work". The statement is still about the workers' needs, but it now also includes society's needs. The product of work is to be valued by its contribution to the well-being of the community.

The curse of work

Look again at the "curse of work".

The Bible does not start with Adam's disobedience. It

says that when God made mankind, work was part of the plan (see Genesis 1.28) by which all of creation would be kept in harmony. The great first king of Israel, Saul was a ploughman; his successor David was a shepherd. Jesus was born into a working family and became a carpenter. Paul, like all the other rabbis, had to learn a trade (he was a tentmaker, and good enough to earn his keep - Acts 18.3).

A few Quaker families looked at the terrible conditions of workers who did seem to be cursed in the way they had to earn their money. While many employers considered that there was nothing that could or should be done to help, Cadburys moved their factory into a garden setting at Bournville, and planned the work space with the comfort, health and satisfaction of their workers in mind.

In Sweden, Volvo looked at the problems of car workers, and found that monotony was one of the great curses, leading to frustration, poor work and accidents. The production line was changed to bring in variety, interest and satisfaction.

Many charity workers (from junior clerk to Director), ministers and priests, artists and mothers-at-home receive less than they would in commercial work of about the same level of effort and skill. This is generally explained by saying they get "job-satisfaction" in their work to make up the balance.

Work and life

Work is now seen as something more than its scientific definition. Work includes surroundings, purpose (motivation), interest and personal values.

Work can be - hard, difficult, dangerous, dirty, boring, wasteful, degrading, tiring and demanding.

Work can be - easy, simple, interesting, helpful, creative, inspiring, inventive, enjoyable.

Work can be - easy and dangerous; hard and simple; dirty and interesting; helpful and boring. Which words in the first list cannot be used with which words in the second list?

Work is necessary. Without work we cannot eat, cannot be clothed and housed, cannot be healthy, cannot be informed, entertained or transported. Work is part of the way the world is, work was in the idea and the act of creation.

My work is part of my relationship with everyone else, part of my place in the community. If my work helps good relationships and builds up a good community, I have a right to work and I expect to have some sort of enjoyment or satisfaction in my work. Jesus said "My Father works always, and I too must work" (John 5.17), so good work brings me into some kind of partnership with God.

I can tell whether I am doing my best, and that is part of "good work". Then I need some help in seeing whether my work is good for the community, and it is not enough just to know that it was done before or that people will pay me to do it now. Good work fits the needs, the time, the place, and the people (read Ecclesiastes 3. 1.13 - most of which is a well-known song).

Of course, I cannot stop and think about this every day, but the management and the unions ought to do so every now and again, or the industry will fall to pieces and the jobs will disappear in a cloud of troubles. It is interesting to look at some modern industries with this standard in mind.

One last thought. Our word "worship" stands for words which mean service, or labour. The right relationship to God includes serving him, obeying him in work, (as well as other things).

Questions

1. How can you evaluate work? Street sweepers help to keep us alive, so do doctors; should there be any difference in the way we think of them or in what we pay them? Is one job more a right or a curse than the other?

2. How could you explain to someone that his "right" to keep a job is less important than the community's "right" to stop that job because it is anti-social?

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